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U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/822,211
Reply to Office Action dated January 17, 2007**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A threadless cap for closing a potable liquid bottle, the potable liquid bottle having a neck with an upper edge defining a discharge opening, said threadless cap comprising:

a) ~~—a lid for overlying and sealingly engaging the upper edge; scaling the discharge opening, said lid including a tension ring for retaining said cap on the neck of the bottle, said tension ring having an inwardly extending rib for engaging the neck of the bottle;~~

b) ~~—said lid including a tension ring for retaining said cap on the neck of the bottle, said tension ring having an inwardly extending rib for engaging the neck of the bottle;~~

c) ~~—a skirt depending from said lid, said skirt including a line of weakness facilitating a manual tear of said skirt, said line of weakness extending along a portion of a perimeter of said skirt, said line of weakness including a portion extending across said tension ring to reduce a retaining force exerted by said tension ring on the neck of the bottle when a line of tear propagating as a result of a manual pull applied on said skirt extends across said tension ring;~~
and

d) ~~—a tear stop at a location intersecting a line of tear propagating as a result of a manual pull applied on said skirt, said tear stop for preventing the line of tear to propagate beyond said tear stop.~~

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2. (Original) A threadless cap as defined in claim 1, wherein said tear stop includes a thickened portion on said cap.
3. (Currently Amended) A threadless cap as defined in claim ~~2~~ 1, wherein said line of weakness is configured such that a strip is formed when said skirt is being torn.
4. (Original) A threadless cap as defined in claim 3, wherein said tear stop prevents complete separation of said strip from a remainder of said cap.
5. (Original) A threadless cap as defined in claim 4, wherein said skirt includes a pull tab that is attached to said strip.
6. (Currently Amended) A threadless cap as defined in claim 5, wherein said strip extends partially around the perimeter of said cap ~~cap~~ skirt.
7. (Original) A threadless cap as defined in claim 6, wherein at least a portion of said line of weakness extends along said tension ring.
8. (Original) A threadless cap as defined in claim 7, wherein said lid and said skirt are integrally formed.
9. (Original) A threadless cap as defined in claim 8, wherein said lid and said skirt are integrally formed by injection molding.
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Currently Amended) A threadless cap for closing a potable liquid bottle, the potable liquid bottle having a neck with an upper edge defining a discharge opening, said threadless cap comprising:

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a) ~~—~~ a lid for overlying and ~~sealingly engaging the upper edge;~~ sealing the discharge opening.

b) ~~—~~ said lid including a tension ring for retaining said cap on ~~said~~ the neck of the bottle, said tension ring having an inwardly extending rib for engaging the neck of the bottle; and

c) ~~—~~ a skirt depending from said lid, said skirt including a line of weakness facilitating a manual tear of said skirt, said line of weakness extending along a portion of a perimeter of said skirt;

d) ~~—~~ said line of weakness including a portion extending across said tension ring to reduce a retaining force exerted by said tension ring on the neck of the bottle when a tear line propagating as a result of a manual pull applied on said skirt extends across said tension ring.

12. (Original) A threadless cap as defined in claim 11, wherein said line of weakness is configured such that a strip is formed when said skirt is being torn.

13. (Currently Amended) A threadless cap as defined in claim 12, including a tear stop ~~at a location intersecting the line of tear propagating as a result of a manual pull applied on said skirt,~~ said tear stop for preventing the line of tear line to propagate beyond said tear stop.

14. (Original) A threadless cap as defined in claim 13, wherein said tear stop includes a thickened portion on said cap.

15. (Original) A threadless cap as defined in claim 14, wherein said tear stop prevents complete separation of said strip from a remainder of said cap.

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16. (Original) A threadless cap as defined in claim 15, wherein said skirt includes a pull tab that is attached to said strip.
17. (Currently Amended) A threadless cap as defined in claim 16, wherein said strip extends partially around the perimeter of said ~~cap~~ skirt.
18. (Original) A threadless cap as defined in claim 17, wherein at least a portion of said line of weakness extends along said tension ring.
19. (Original) A threadless cap as defined in claim 18, wherein said lid and said skirt are integrally formed.
20. (Original) A threadless cap as defined in claim 19, wherein said lid and said skirt are integrally formed by injection molding.
- 21-60. (Cancelled)
61. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 1, wherein said line of weakness is configured such that the line of tear propagating as a result of a manual pull applied on said skirt propagates along the portion of the perimeter of said skirt and subsequently propagates along the portion extending across said tension ring.
62. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 1, wherein the portion of the perimeter of said skirt comprises at least half of the perimeter of said skirt.
63. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 1, wherein the portion of the perimeter of said skirt comprises at least three-quarters of the perimeter of said skirt.
64. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 1, wherein the portion of said line of weakness extending across said tension ring is adjacent to said tear stop.

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65. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 1, wherein said tear stop has a surface allowing said tension ring to progressively spread radially outwardly when said cap is being snap fitted on the neck of the bottle.
66. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 1, where said tear stop has a portion for engaging the neck of the bottle.
67. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 11, wherein said line of weakness is configured such that the tear line propagating as a result of a manual pull applied on said skirt propagates along the portion of the perimeter of said skirt and subsequently propagates along the portion extending across said tension ring.
68. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 11, wherein the portion of the perimeter of said skirt comprises at least half of the perimeter of said skirt.
69. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 11, wherein the portion of the perimeter of said skirt comprises at least three-quarters of the perimeter of said skirt.
70. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 13, wherein the portion of said line of weakness extending across said tension ring is adjacent to said tear stop.
71. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 13, wherein said tear stop has a surface allowing said tension ring to progressively spread radially outwardly when said cap is being snap fitted on the neck of the bottle.
72. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 13, where said tear stop has a portion for engaging the neck of the bottle.
73. (New) A threadless cap for closing a water bottle, the water bottle having a neck with an upper edge defining a discharge opening, said threadless cap comprising:

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- a lid for overlying and sealing the discharge opening, said lid including a tension ring for retaining said cap on the neck of the bottle, said tension ring having an inwardly extending rib for engaging the neck of the bottle; and
- a skirt depending from said lid, said skirt including:
 - a first weakness line segment below said tension ring and extending along said tension ring for at least half of a perimeter of said tension ring;
 - a second weakness line segment extending across said tension ring; and
 - a pull tab to initiate a tear which propagates along said first weakness line segment in order to partially separate said skirt from said lid and then along said second weakness line segment to rupture said tension ring and allow removal of said cap from the neck.

74. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 73, wherein said first weakness line segment and said second weakness line segment are part of a continuous line of weakness.

75. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 74, wherein said continuous line of weakness is configured to prevent a complete separation of said skirt from said lid as said cap is being removed from the neck.

76. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 75, wherein said first weakness line segment extends along said tension ring over more than half of the perimeter of said tension ring.

77. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 76, wherein said first weakness line segment defines an arc of a circle.

78. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 77, wherein said arc of a circle is parallel to said tension ring.

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79. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 77, wherein said second weakness line segment extends upwardly from said first weakness line segment and intersects said tension ring.

80. (New) A threadless cap as defined in claim 75, wherein said first weakness line segment extends along said tension ring over less than three-quarters of the perimeter of said tension ring.